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APOLLO

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the Magazine of the Arts for

CONNOISSEURS AND COLLECTORS

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CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS BY PERSPEX

REALISM AND THE ARTIST



THE CANAL BRIDGE. By L. S. LOWRY.
From the Exhibition at the Lefevre Gallery. PERSPEX's choice for the Picture of the Month.

THERE are moments when one wonders whether there can be any possible link between one expression in art and another. Looking back over the recent exhibitions which have excited me I find that they have a diversity which looks as though it defies any sort of synthesis in its centuries-long stretch from the Renaissance art with which the Victoria and Albert Museum has reopened seventeen more rooms, to such contemporaries as L. S. Lowry at the Lefevre, Ruskin Spear at the Leicester, and R. O. Dunlop at the Leger Galleries. Somewhere between stand such things as the water-colours of Turner and other great water-colourists at the British Museum, the bronzes of Degas among the French Masters at Marlborough Fine Arts, and the French XVIIIth Century Interior at Wildenstein's.

It may be that the rooms at South Kensington give us a clue. They are concerned with the exhibition of the primary treasures of the late Gothic and Renaissance collections. First of all the museum authorities have to be congratulated upon the magnificence of display, which in these rooms, as in all those reopened since the war, is making the Victoria and Albert a museum without peer among the great museums of the world. At the moment the effect is spoiled only because in the entrance galleries scaffolding and the activities of workmen indicate the work still in progress; but as soon as we arrive at the finished galleries, we find them up to the high standard of those already in being: the Gothic Galleries which precede them in period, and the XVIIth century Continental art

and its Tudor and Stuart contemporary work are here. This link in the chain is therefore of enormous importance, and taken in conjunction with the adjoining exhibitions of the Raphael Cartoons and the tapestries, gives us a very complete picture of the development of style in a host of media.

The Victoria and Albert Museum, thanks to the generosity and taste of connoisseurs and the far-sighted policy of its directors, possesses a superb collection of this Renaissance art, particularly of sculpture. The sculpture and the wonderful series of painted cassoni are the outstanding things if one dares to choose among supreme examples. Even in the earlier rooms devoted to Spanish and German work the three German wood sculptures by Reimenschneider and Veit Stross establish the sculptural claim; but when we come to the Italian rooms and find the examples of work by Luca della Robbia, and by Donatello, in which the museum is so rich, nothing else is comparable. Two cases of medals, chiefly by Pisanello, manifest another phase of the art.

We have not space to enumerate even the outstanding works as the successive rooms carry us on through the period. Donatello's magnificent relief of the "Ascension," his gilt terra-cotta "Virgin and Child," the vast heraldic enamelled terra-cotta by Luca della Robbia made for René of Anjou, and the priceless possession, the "Labours of the Months" reliefs which he made for Piero de Medici; the charming "Boy with Bagpipes" of Andrea della Robbia, and the exquisite sarcophagus of Santa Guistina from Padua, works

by Settignano and Rossellino, whose "Virgin with the Laughing Child" is a delight—the search for truth to nature expressed in grandeur of form goes on. Only towards the end, when Northern influences from over the Alps made themselves felt in such works as the Mantegazza "Lamentation over the Dead Christ" and Amadeo's "Dead Christ with Angels," do we step from the ideal to something like realism, though the sublimity of the subject and the Renaissance influence inevitably lift it above mere realism.

Today there are no such bulwarks against the starkest reality. It may be partly a question of patronage, for the princes and prelates who in the XVth century were the patrons of art—many of them are shown on the Pisanello medals in the V. and A. Exhibition—demanded that the life presented to them should be thus sublimated. Piero de Medici, as he looked at the ceiling of his study decorated with Luca della Robbia's cool blue and gold-flecked "Labours of the Months," would not really have wished for a realistic representation of the peasants or workmen of mediaeval Italy. The XVIIIth century French aristocrats who sat at those exquisite desks and tables of inlaid satinwood which we see at Wildenstein's were not the kind of folk who would countenance Courbet's realistic peasants, and would have been horrified by the realism of Degas' bronzes or the hundred-and-one manifestations of democratic art which have now followed. But art has migrated from the church and the palace to the café, the bourgeoisie home, the public-house, and it is under no necessity of idealising what it finds there.

L. S. Lowry, who has his one-man show at the Lefevre Gallery, carries this realism to its extreme. He deliberately chooses the most hideous town landscape of the industrial North of England (surely the ugliest thing which mankind has allowed to blunder into existence) and sets it down almost unredeemed. The staffage of these pictures is equally depressing, and Lowry renders them with a kind of symbolic lack of individuality—the "hands" of the "dark Satanic mills" which dominate the ruined land. With a formula which gives them this anonymity—thin bodies, and a kind of musical crochets for limbs; a feeling of caps and bowler hats, woollen jumpers and ill-fitting shoes—he flicks in hundreds upon hundreds of these creatures of a barren world. They crowd upon fairgrounds or at football matches, move in streams to the factories, or stand about the streets, their gaunt forms echoing the shapes of the myriad chimney-stacks from which the smoke belches; they fade away in dim perspective along vistas flanked by little back-to-back houses; they loiter or play beside barge-laden canals. Strangely, there is a curious beauty in all this. It is not the romantic Brangwynnesque beauty which idealises the life, but the realistic beauty which accepts it. It does not even criticise nor show anger: it is purely objective, detached, calm. Perhaps that is where its value lies.

Lowry's technical method of using a prevailing creamy-white groundwork against which the buildings stand starkly and the crowds are a confetti of colour is highly individual. It has the curious gaiety which we know is true to the life of these industrial communities, who are terribly surprised, shocked and angry when some pampered aesthete from the soft South is staggered that people can live without a tree or a blade of grass in sight, and without the least pretence of dignity in their architecture.

Lowry, as though he would escape sometimes from this man-marrowed world, paints white, lonely seas where the regular small waves flow endlessly in. These pictures would be Surrealistic if they did not happen to be his kind of realism.

Against this stark realism Ruskin Spear is a wild romantic, but his first one-man show at the Leicester Galleries reveals just what mixture he makes of the dream and the business. London street scenes; public-house interiors where figures lose their outlines in a rich crepuscular shadow, and barmaids and beerpulls are mere scattered highlights amid the pervading dark; workmen's cafés, barber's shops—these are as truly Mr. Spear's territory as those mill-ridden towns of Lancashire are Mr. Lowry's.

As a painter he makes excursions into the countryside, or essays (and achieves) Still Life. With an echo of Sickert he can do all these things and do them quite brilliantly, but it is the Cockney who has the most individual vision. Hammersmith Broadway is his spiritual home, and its teeming life yields him his subjects.

I sometimes wish he would pose to himself that question with which in the distant 'twenties Wyndham Lewis confounded us all: "Artists, where is your vortex?" In some of the best and most ambitious of Ruskin Spear's paintings, such as "Mr. Hollingbery's Canary," wherein he has immortalised the bird which lords it above the heads of the company in the bar of "The Hampshire Hog," one's eye is taken right out of the involved pattern of reflected light among bottles and glasses, customers, clock and canary, and is held by a glaring white disc of light at the extreme top of the picture.

As this happens to be crossed by two converging bars of the bird-cage it looks like a second enormous clock, out of tone and place; and it effectively ruins a picture before which one has paid the artist the enormous compliment of remembering Manet's "Bar of the Folies Bergère." It is an extreme instance of this fault of bad pictorial organisation which is Ruskin Spear's pitfall; but other works show it in different degree.

Charles Murray, showing in the next room, has left his usual type of stylised figure painting for Scottish landscape. A beach scene with figures beneath a stormy sky, and a picture, "Snowy Lane," had a coherence all too often lacking, but Mr. Murray uses his paint in that sticky, oleaginous manner which personally I dislike. Glancing at—and rapidly away from—those unnatural skies and unshapely mountains, one wondered what thing in his mind the artist had to communicate, and remembered the perfection of communication of nature which one had found at the exhibition of the English water-colourists at the British Museum, where the redecorated Print Room has been opened with an exhibition devoted to Turner, his forerunners and contemporaries.

Let a heresy be confessed: the Turners came near to disappointing me, perhaps in reaction from the brilliance of the Agnew's show recently. True, it is fascinating to examine this careful selection from the many thousands of Turner's sketches, and to watch his development from the painstaking topographical and architectural draughtsman to the creative genius concerned with the most far-fetched effects of blazing light and colour, the expression of the most inexpressible phenomena of nature. It spelled a use of water-colour which carried the medium forward into new dimensions where pure colour is untrammelled by drawing or by the tone drawing of earlier artists; and we can watch every step of the progress. It may be that in this museum exhibition there is not really enough Turner, despite the wealth of it. Were the museum authorities wise to show us so much else? The splendid Francis Towne's with their controlled design and their marvellous sense of volume expressed in pure line almost steal Turner's thunder. The discovery of the mountains by Cozens; the finished perfection of Cotman; the consuming pace of Girtin's genius; the freshness of natural vision of Constable: these things compete for our attention; and in this centenary year it might have been well to pay Turner the homage of making him sole guest. Yet we would not have missed these others and the opportunity for comparison and the study of the medium which they offer.

Two other water-colour exhibitions of the month were of interest even though it would be presumptive to think of them among these giants of the art. But the native genius for handling this medium leads to fascinating results in the hands of any sound exponent. At Walkers there has been a memorial exhibition of the work of Sidney Mackenzie Litten, who died two years ago. Litten was one of those artists whose promise was acclaimed by men like Sir William Rothenstein, and whose work received a certain recognition, but not enough, in his lifetime. On the one hand he was a sound, traditional, topographical water-colourist; on the other an experimenter who tried out abstract art (but felt that its purpose was as a means to good picture making rather than as an end in itself) and along with this worked in a vein of poetry and fantasy influenced somewhat by Samuel Palmer. In this memorial exhibition both kinds of work were shown, as well as one or two of the etchings and engravings. The other exhibition was of the water-colours of Albert Goodwin at the Fine Art Society, and, although Goodwin died in 1932, this too was something of a memorial exhibition as none has been held since. He is essentially a XIXth century figure, accepting the doctrines which prevailed and acting brilliantly upon them right to the end of his life. Ruskin was an enthusiast for his work, which, of course, in itself almost condemns him in the eyes of those modernists who believe that any painter should do exactly what he likes so long as he doesn't paint as a XIXth century artist. A catholic aesthetic taste, accepting Ruskin's dicta as at least one way of art, and therewith Albert Goodwin's sensitive transcription of poetic and picturesque scenery put down with the utmost academic care, will enjoy these pictures of English cathedrals, such as "Grey Dawn, Lincoln," and the acceptedly romantic Italian and Swiss scene.

Three young contemporaries showing at Colnaghi's bring us back out of this dream of romance to our own period and to realism. They are John Buckland-Wright, Clifford Hall, and Nigel Lambourne, and their offerings are of drawings plus some delicately stylised wood-engravings by Buckland-Wright. The subject matter of the drawings was thoroughly realistic, the model was unidealised, however much she needed it, and the effect was one of life on the levels of the crowd. In fact we were back to the world of the cheap café, the dance hall (an excellent drawing of Nigel Lambourne's

SHAFTS FROM APOLLO'S BOW



SOUTH TALLAND, CHICHESTER. By R. O. DUNLOP.
From the Exhibition at the Leger Galleries.

had this title), the crowded popular beach, and the little room. The studies of Nudes remembered Degas in their truth and immediacy. Clifford Hall had some sensitive impressions of Venice, though Spain defeated him as it defeats so many. In quite other

vein from these sketches from life were the highly worked-up and finely designed wood engravings of Buckland-Wright: delicate, rhythmic line and at times a use of several background tones which gave the quality of aquatint. An enjoyable and lively exhibition.

The mention of Degas reminds one that the Marlborough Fine Arts' new show of XIXth and XXth century French Masters includes five of the bronzes cast from the modellings which Degas made at the end of his life. They transfer his particular vision as a painter into the art of sculpture, and are brilliant Impressionistic things made when his sensitive fingers were having to do the work for which his sight had failed him. They are the high-light of an exhibition which, besides notable works by Corot, Courbet and the Impressionists, has Daumier's water-colour drawing for his "Organ-Grinder" and the important drawing by Ingres for his painting, "Roger defending Angelique"—something very far removed from realism this.

Finally a word on an English Impressionist, R. O. Dunlop, who is having a one-man show at the Leger Gallery. In this exhibition Dunlop is not depending so entirely upon the use of the palette knife as is his wont; and, as that use was in danger of becoming too slick, this is all to the good. There are still passages in the pictures where formlessness is worrying and one wants more discipline, but against this there is the enormous joy of sparkling colour and brilliant tone. Some of the new pictures have turned to village and country town architecture, street scenes with figures, and all this is helpful in giving formal qualities to an artist whose danger lies in his own exuberance in face of nature. Dunlop is, as most Impressionists are, a romantic, and these sunlit places of the South are more than geographically far from the industrial towns from which we started. But as we observed, there are moments when one wonders whether there can be any link between one expression in art and another.

SHAFTS FROM APOLLO'S BOW—Raphael and the Cold War

IT has invariably been some consolation to those of us whose primary concern lies with matters of art, that in a world of strife and faction we could escape into what has been called a "private heaven" immune from the giant hatreds of hot and cold wars. True we had our own little quarrels, but they were harmless family affairs which threatened no man's rights and could be conducted with a certain gay insouciance.

One is saddened, therefore, to find Raphael involved in the struggle of the rival ideologies, and one of his greatest pictures becoming a bone of contention between New York and Moscow. But so it is; as Polonius would say: "'Tis true, 'tis pity; pity 'tis, 'tis true," the *casus belli* of this particular fracas being the famous Alba Madonna of Raphael which hangs in the National Gallery at Washington with a number of other magnificent Old Masters given by Andrew Mellon. Or does it? For *Voks*, the official organ of the U.S.S.R. Society for Cultural Relations, in its latest issue published a full-page illustration of this supreme masterpiece and stated that it was still hanging on show at the Hermitage in Leningrad. Whereupon *Art News* of America, in an editorial by the editor, Alfred Frankfurter, furiously attacked the art policy of the Soviet authorities not only for claiming the possession of this Raphael but for suppressing the works of Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh, Matisse, and others which were once the showpieces of the Museum of Modern Western Art in Moscow and are now, it asserts, in packing cases in the cellars under the orders of Premier Stalin who calls them "Degenerate Cosmopolitanism." Whereupon again the *New York Times* made the question of the Alba Madonna front page news (and the front page in a 52-page newspaper is a front page) and also published a photograph of it.

The background of the story is a strange one. The picture was bought in 1931 by Mr. Andrew Mellon, the great American financier, who was at that time Secretary to the Treasury under President Hoover. He gave the largest sum ever paid for a single picture: 1,666,400 dollars. The next year he bought more of the famous Hermitage pictures, Botticelli, Titian, Van Eyck, paying in all nearly seven million dollars. These transactions were made public

in 1934 in an income tax claim. At the time of the actual sales there was only a rumour of pictures having disappeared from the Hermitage and a stout denial by a Soviet official in Paris, who declared roundly that "the sale of priceless art treasures in which the Soviet takes such pride would be an admission of moral as well as financial weakness from which the Soviet Union is not now suffering." (The "now" was perhaps an ill-advised adverb, but let that pass.) However, whatever the process or whoever the Russian agent, official or otherwise, just as in Chesterton's poem "the village green that had got mislaid turned up in the squire's backyard," these pictures turned up in the great Mellon collection, the difference being that they were certainly honestly and quite heavily paid for. And in due course they were given to the National Gallery at Washington where they still are.

The tragedy of this comedy lies in the fact that this question of clear objective truth can for a moment become part of the muddled partisan political quarrel. In any world governed by commonsense and simple honesty we could know in a few days whether *Voks* was in error in thinking the picture is still at the Hermitage; whether any version of the Alba Madonna hangs there; and if one does, whether it is the original and Mr. Mellon had been sold an extremely expensive pup (and if so by whom). We might also know whether there existed a brilliant forger who could create a copy which would deceive either the Hermitage authorities or the American buyers. Travellers and art authorities could move easily between the two cities and examine the evidence for themselves—and, indeed, for all of us.

Alas for civilised values, such simple investigation seems no longer possible; even Raphael, that prince of men and painters, is dragged into the irrelevant and unseemly squabble. Perhaps it is not too late to plead that in this matter, so remote from national politics, and of such import to those who will inherit our world when the present mutual discontents have passed into incredible history as such things do, the art and museum authorities from either side of the Iron Curtain will investigate the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

SOUTH EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST

BY F. M. GODFREY

NO painting of Christ's Baptism is quite like Piero della Francesca's large tempera panel of 1465 in the National Gallery. It is as from another planet, without companions and without antecedents. For although Giotto and Masaccio used a similar language of form, weighty and massive and rounded in the space, Piero's shapes spring from his own artistic vision and poetic imagery, mysteriously linked as they are to the Greco-Roman tradition. The noble statuary of his angels might have come from some ancient sarcophagus, and the bearded Baptist, manly and graceful, from some antique burial urn, while Christ-Hercules firmly stands upon the bed of the limpid stream. In Piero the Italian Renaissance, still young, performs its greatest miracle, that of creating again an archaic and sculptural ideal of the human form. Such forms were steeped in the white light of dawn and in colours of such pristine beauty and purity, deep blue and rose and lavender and marble white, as befitted their god-like appearance upon earth.

Piero was a pioneer of perspective and used the strength of graded and alternating colours to evoke spatial recession, as in the group of angels who stand entwined, yet arranged in depth, behind the marmoreal tree. Space is suggested by the leafy plants in front of it and by the winding band of the river and by such striking and delicate forms as that of the man bending forward to strip off his shirt in the middle distance, or the turbaned ancients watching the event from the other side of the water, throwing their blue and scarlet and golden brown shadows into the stream. Piero has gently relieved his abundance of upright shapes by the undulating line of the hillside, tapestry of brown tones and olive greens with white patches, the dove spreading its wings over the head of Christ, the sweeping bend of the river and the sensitive curve of the man repeating it. These irregular shapes and divisions are the principal bearers of vital movement in a work of romanesque statuary and monumental grandeur.

Seven years after Piero painted his rounded figures in pallid sunlight, "classical like the columns of a Greek temple," Christ's Baptism with Verrocchio assumed a medieval shape, harsh and Gothic angular and full of quiet devotion and ascetic sinuosity. These drab and slender figures, framed by the formal tree and the formal rock, with a distant view of a waterbound promontory and hills, have long attracted attention, mainly by dint of Vasari's report that the youthful Leonardo, then in Verrocchio's workshop (1472), inscribed with pointed brush the rapturous angel bearing the vestments of Christ. *Leonardo lavoro un angelo che teneva alchuni vesti.* Compared with his brother from Verrocchio's hand who looks at him in love and in wonder, this angel with his robes so neatly arranged in angular folds and "the cascade of hair rippling" down his shoulders, this poetic fancy-child of Leonardo's had come to stay as his peculiar conception of boy-angel. The quaint old legend by which Verrocchio, on seeing his pupil's work, gave up painting for good—for not only the angel but the tuft of grass growing among the pebbles and the shimmering labyrinth of lake and rocks in the twilight are by Leonardo's hand—this legend has long been discredited. For the Florentine master was

above all a sculptor and a worker in precious metals and must have been glad of the gifted boy to whom henceforth he could entrust all work of the painter that might come his way.

Modern scholarship has long been aware of Leonardo's place in the work of his master and how his youthful elegance and grace and something of his superhuman intelligence have left their mark upon certain creations which came out of Verrocchio's workshop during Leonardo's stay, the bronze David above all and the apostle Thomas at Or San Michele. But eighty years ago Walter Pater interpreted Vasari's story already in this spirit. "It happened that Verrocchio was employed by the brethren of Vallombrosa to paint the Baptism of Christ, and Leonardo was allowed to finish an angel in the left-hand corner. . . . But in this Baptism the pupil had surpassed the master; and Verrocchio turned away as one stunned, and as if his sweet earlier work must thereafter be distasteful to him, from the bright animated angel of Leonardo's hand. The angel may still be seen in Florence, a space of sunlight in the cold laboured old picture; but the legend is true only in sentiment, for painting had always been the art by which Verrocchio set least store."

Bellini's "Baptism" of 1501-2 in Santa Corona's Church at Vicenza follows in the wake of Cima da Conegliano's similar composition. The classical mode of figure arrangement, symmetrical and central, has not yet been abandoned in favour of the diagonal with which Titian hails in the Baroque. Christ faces us at the very edge of the foreground with the Baptist and the angelic attendants converging upon Him from the rocky shore in an almost frontal position. Firm structural design and vigorous convincing gesture are less emphasized in this late altarpiece than sheer loveliness of the human form and sumptuous colour and atmosphere.

In grace and sweetness these wistful angels are of the "fragile and flowerlike type" which in Bellini's later works have taken the place of the more substantial Madonnas and saints which he painted under the impact of Antonello da Messina. From him he almost certainly learnt how to intensify his colour and to soften his contours by applying thin glazes of oil upon a tempera background. For the slender beauty and elegance of his angel shapes, their noble restraint and serenity are enhanced by a new feeling for the air around them, the vibrant light and the translucent colour of textures, of blue and yellow, of emerald and rose.

The modulated whiteness of Christ's body, blending softly with the rock-bound azure lake, the shimmer of grey and blue and lilac tones in the lit-up mountains beyond, range upon range, under the turquoise and orange sky—strangely evocative of Cézanne's opalescent and tranquil mountain mirage in the Lake d'Annecy picture—testify to Bellini's mastery of the fusion of tones which gave to Venetian painters of the XVIth century a new sense of spatial illusion and of atmospheric values.

In the iconographical history of Christ's Baptism, written by the painters of Southern Europe, Titian's work in the Pinacotheca Capitolina represents a half-way house

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST



Fig. I. Piero della Francesca. *National Gallery, London.*



Fig. II. Verrocchio and Leonardo da Vinci (detail). *Florence Art Academy.*

between Piero's sphinx-like and static calm and the flaming elongations of El Greco. This work has not gone unquestioned; but modern opinion ascribes it to Titian's transitional period, when he tore himself free from the Giorgionesque and developed a powerful style of his own (1515). Christ's countenance in this Roman Baptism, the dark deep-seated eyes, the noble Grecian brow can even be traced to Bellini's Christ in the Baptism of Santa Corona. But the design as a whole, the bold diagonal composition, the vigorous movement of the Baptist, his strong athletic body forcefully swung around to perform his sacred office, his barbarous shock of hair, bear the stamp of Titian's youthful paganism.

This picture was seen by Marcantonio Michiel in the house of Giovanni Ram as late as 1531, and the dark figure of this donor has been given a surprising prominence at the foot of the holy personages. From him indeed the eye is led upwards towards Baptist and Redeemer, and his Renaissance assumption of place has also a structural function in the composition. Such powerful physical presence as that of the Baptist—woodland satyr or faun rather than messianic precursor—is palpably matched by the savage nature around, dark towering tree forms and foliage and horrid vultures on the greensward in the middle distance. Angels' heads look down upon the scene from snowy clouds, floating in an azure sky, while rich notes of red and of black in the extreme foreground frame the nude radiance of the principal actors.

At the end of the XVIth century, whose beginning saw the birth of Venetian colour opulence in the works of the

aged Bellini, the strange psychological and artistic phenomenon of El Greco appears at its height. The stage on which he performs is not of this world. These emaciated superhuman figures of angels, of saints and indeed of the divine personages are Greco's formula for his religious experience which was that of his country and of his age. He must be ranged by the side of Cervantes and Ignatius Loyola and above all of the mystics, Juan de la Cruz and Saint Teresa. In him the last consuming effort of medieval Christianity to gather up its forces in a new revival of the Church Triumphant becomes pictorial form. The essence of El Greco's painting is in such pent-up emotion as can no longer be contained in static bodies. Therefore his violent sweeps of clouds and of surging bodies, his abnormal proportions and even distortions of face and of limb.

The Prado Baptism formed part of a large altarpiece, painted between 1590 and 1600 for the Church of Dona Maria de Aragon at Madrid, and recalling the story of Christ's Life from the Annunciation to the Resurrection. This was in keeping with the Jesuit practice of visualising in vivid spiritual imaginings the whole Passion of Jesus. The Baptism was painted upon a narrow panel of disproportionate height, measuring 138 inches by 57 inches. This made possible the superhuman length of the figures and the close inter-relation of the lower and upper spheres of the picture. There was no depth nor horizon. The bare rocks, the swirling draperies, the ecstatic upward movement of angels and putti everywhere towards the immeasurable glory of the Father, the intermittent



Fig. III. G. Bellini. *Santa Corona Church at Venice.*



Fig. IV. Titian. *Pinacotheca Capitolina, Rome.*



Fig. V. El Greco. *Prado, Madrid.*

radiance of lighted bodies upon dark rocks or caves—they all have their spiritual rôle to play in the composition.

The mystic abandon in Christ's glance and posture, the Hosannah-to-the-Highest attitude of the angel between Baptist and Redeemer, spreading his fiery wings as he throws up his arms heavenwards, St. John's humility and dedication give to this group a unity and intensity of design in contrast with the full orchestration required for the *mise en scène* of the Empyreum. The ghostly bodies of the principal actors impersonate an emotional quality and "high-pitched religiosity" which in a single movement, and aided by all the resources of the Theatrum

REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST



Fig. VI. Nicolas Poussin.
Earl of Ellesmere's
Collection.

Sacrum of the High Baroque, carries the mind upwards and reveals to the impressionable soul the divine significance of Christ's Baptism.

With Poussin's "Sacrament of Baptism," now in Lord Ellesmere's Collection, but painted in Rome for Chantelou in 1647, the southern representation of Christ's Baptism assumes yet another and entirely novel form. Neither Bellini nor Titian are the ancestors of this composition. But Raphael's *Stanza della Segnatura* and *Incendio del Borgo* and the *Cartoons for Tapestry* must have for ever haunted his mind. If movement, according to Mr. Berenson, or "the feeling for functional line" is one of the most essential elements of great art, Poussin's Baptism must be so defined. Indeed, among the groups of those who have seen a great light and who convey this emotion in gestures constrained only by the laws of classical convention, the variety of virile nudes is such that not a single form or posture seems to recur. The whole is steeped in half-light or *chiaroscuro* with the greatest radiance of bright scarlet lavished upon the youth on the right who with his companions in garments of deep blue hails the Holy Spirit descending in form of a white dove. The central figures are far less emphasised by sensations of colour. Their excellence rests upon the magnificent anatomies equal to some of the best in XVIIth century Italy. Could not the sinewy old man drawing on his socks in the left foreground come from Michelangelo's *Cartoon of the Bathing Soldiers*, or the ancient with curved back behind St. John the Baptist bear the great globe itself like Atlas upon his gigantic shoulders?

Poussin's is the last European incarnation of Greek and Roman antiquity in pictorial art; for the new Christians of his Baptism are the true athletes of the Agora and the philosophers of the Platonic Academy. Has not the dark brooding figure behind Christ just come from the market place, and is not the flower-wreathed ephebe on the extreme left like one of the Olympian victors for whom Pindar wrote his *Pæan*? Poussin was no eclectic or learned academician. His mind was enraptured by the

Hellenic spirit as that of any artist of the Renaissance. He nearly makes us forget that he ushered in the Grand Siècle where classical art becomes frivolous and rhetorical.

This Baptism is placed before an almost barren escarpment where a diagonal path leads the eye to the ruined tower as "the central point of perspective." Appennine foothills are rising steeply behind in graded recession of tones from browns to light and darker greens, culminating in greyish and violet peaks in the distance beyond. In the science of composition these quiet horizontals of the landscape at rest, just sufficiently varied by trees and buildings and summits, form an impressive contrast to the strongly modelled standing and kneeling Christians of the Agora in the foreground.

Thus Christ's Baptism became one of the great subjects of South-European painting since the Renaissance. Firm and grave Piero della Francesca placed the Saviour in the full frontal position, the Baptist, approaching Him, in strict profile, the angels detached by the side, a solemn statuary of celestial presence. Verrocchio's solution is flamboyantly Gothic, medieval even in its unredeemed asceticism. With Bellini, placing Christ in the very centre of the composition and graceful angels holding His garment in readiness, the classical formula is found. From him Francesco Francia, in his *Dresden Baptism* of 1509, proceeded to endow a similar arrangement of figures with more eloquent emotion, a greater emphasis on bodily form in the devoutly kneeling Baptist, the meek figure of Christ, the worshipping angels. Here the grouping of the figures is superior even to that of Bellini, where the Baptist stands behind the Saviour and by Him unnoticed. Francia selects to give to the precursor a human form of equal importance and ideal beauty as that of Christ. His flowing rhythm of line and of sentiment forestalls the artists of the XVIIth century, such as Albani and Francesco Maratta, who, imbued with greater sweetness of expression and a new movement of limb and of drapery, bring the representations of Christ's Baptism to a triumphant close.



A group of late XVIIth and early XVIIIth century plate; the two-handled cup and cover, 1694; the standing cup, 1705; the alms dish, 1679; the candlestick, 1692.

FESTIVAL PLATE

ONE of the few features of the Festival of Britain that will be welcomed without reservation by all who are interested in art is the exhibition of Historic Plate of the City of London, organised by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths, which is to take place in Goldsmiths' Hall. I am assured that the title "Historic Plate" has been chosen mainly with a view to attracting the foreign visitor and does not for a moment imply that the pieces have been selected on grounds of historic rather than artistic merit. On the other hand, the exhibition will cover the development of the silversmiths' art from the late XVth to the mid-XIXth century, and it is not likely that every phase of its evolution through three hundred and fifty years will meet with equal approval on the part of those whose judgment is influenced by contemporary ideals. There are two complete cycles of fashion to be studied in the silver displayed: the earliest pieces, dating from the late Gothic period, have a purity of form and excellence of proportion which satisfy all the demands of modern taste; the Leigh cup of 1499 lent by the Mercers Company might at first seem to disprove this claim, but in fact most of its elaborate surface decoration is an addition of the mid-XVIth century. During the XVIth century, forms and profiles rapidly became more complex, and all the most mannered forms devised by Netherlandish designers of ornament were seized upon and exploited with a perhaps misplaced enthusiasm by the English artists in silver. The climax was reached by about the turn of the century, and during the XVIIth century we see a gradual simplification of profile in the designs, a gradual broadening out of forms until in the

Restoration period the handsome, grandiose vessels of English Baroque were produced. In the course of this cycle of development something had been forgotten of the beauty of the metal itself, the surface was usually embossed, matted or punched in such a way as to destroy the rich deep lustre which is so prized by the collector of old silver. The Queen Anne silversmiths in turn showed an almost exaggerated respect for their material and offered wares of exquisite proportion with broad, plain surfaces enriched by only the most restrained and dignified ornament. So ends our first cycle; but no sooner has the visitor's eye adjusted itself to the simple grandeur of the early XVIIIth century than it has to start off on the second cycle, and a very adventurous journey it is, through the wildest excesses of rococo, here represented by Paul de Lamerie's finest creations, through the cool intellectual qualities of the neo-classical manner, ending, very uncertainly, on the precipice which separates the pomp of late Regency—as the reign of William IV is misleadingly termed—from the absurdity of Victorian art which turned silver vessels into narrative pictures. There is, in short, something for every taste, whether naive or informed, purist or eclectic.

London is, of course, still full of silver; while collectors of so many other classes of antiques will be heard lamenting the difficulty of finding really fine examples of their particular interest, those who are fortunate enough to be able to buy it will have no great difficulty in finding fine English silver of post-Restoration date. However, the objects shown in this exhibition are, for the most part, of a class not likely to be found in the London sale-rooms or antique shops. The plate of the Livery Companies is remarkable not only on account of its quality, but also on account of the vast proportions of the individual pieces. In the days of their pride and

FESTIVAL PLATE



Standing cup and cover, maker's mark, a bird, 1578.
The Drapers' Company.



Two-handled cup and cover, by Paul de Lamerie, 1737.
The Fishmongers' Company.



Standing salt-cellar, by Augustine Courtauld, 1730.
The Corporation of the City of London.

greatest influence, during the latter part of the XVIIth century and the first half of the XVIIIth century, the City Companies acquired pieces of plate of great size, dishes nearly three feet in diameter, tankards capable of holding a gallon, flagons nearly two feet high, and salts of comparable proportions. With the exception of the salts, it is probable that few of these huge pieces of plate were ever used; they were set out on a great dresser in tier upon tier of gilded splendour, such as Veronese liked to paint in the background of his great banquet scenes.

Unfortunately the Livery Companies possess only a fraction of the old plate which was once in their possession. The XVIIth century was a disastrous period for the finances of many of them. The need to subscribe towards the costs of the Parliamentary armies during the Civil Wars made heavy inroads upon the plate chests of the Companies, and hardly had the freemen and liverymen settled down to enjoy the peace and security of the Restoration before the Great Fire of London destroyed their city and called for further and even more drastic sacrifices of plate. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that few of the Companies should have much pre-Civil War plate to show, and that of the two that are rich in XVIth century plate, one, the Goldsmiths' Company, has acquired most of it in the course of the last fifty years. A third cause of the destruction of the earliest plate of the Companies, and probably the most serious of all, was the ever-changing course of fashion. Only too frequently does one read in the histories of the various Companies of quantities of "decayed" plate being handed over to London goldsmiths for conversion into



Sugar-bowl, by Digby Scott and Benjamin Smith, 1803.
The Corporation of the City of London.

new and more fashionable or useful forms. One should not perhaps be too hasty in condemning those who ordered their old plate to be re-fashioned; careful examination of the earlier pieces in the exhibition will show that they have undergone repeated and sometimes drastic repairs. The methods of cleaning in use must also have been extremely drastic, even up to more recent times. Much of the plate has been re-gilt not once but several times, in particular the great flagon and basin of 1720 belonging to the Corporation of the City of London, which were re-gilt no fewer than six times within 160 years of being made.

The invention of the monteith, the large circular punch bowl with a dentated edge for holding wine-glasses was one of the most serious causes of the sacrifice of "decayed plate." Its great size and massive weight made it an expensive item to purchase and yet fashion decreed its use on convivial occasions. It is sad to reflect that the pompous vessels we see in the exhibition were born out of the destruction of XVIth century, perhaps even mediaeval, plate. On the other hand, the Companies must have acquired many more ewers and rosewater basins than they could ever use, so that the conversion of a few into the essential monteith must have seemed only common sense.

A peculiar feature of Livery plate is that it was usually gilt, and much that was not gilt when made has been gilt since. The lovely original pale gilding is a feature which produces nothing short of awe and reverence in the collector. Unfortunately there is not a great deal of original gilding to be seen, and to judge by their hot and fiery colour most of the pieces which have been re-gilt were so treated during the XIXth century. There is no doubt that, by the XIXth century, a great deal of the City plate was in grievous need of repair and the pieces which were repaired were re-gilt at the same time. Of course, this intense tone of the modern gilding will pass off with wear; this appears to have happened in the case of the pomegranate cup of the Inner Temple which, although it certainly has not its original gilding, has a pleasing pale colour.

The exhibition, which will be opened on May 1st, will give a fairly balanced picture of the production of silver vessels, other than domestic, throughout the period it covers, with perhaps a slight prejudice in favour of the second half of the XVIth century. No one who knows anything of English silver and the rarity of examples of Tudor plate will challenge the wisdom of this selection. The distribution of plate in the exhibition does not, however, by any means correspond to its distribution amongst the Companies. Practically all the important pieces of XVIth century silver owned by the Livery Companies are on view, while the tall loving cups of mid or late XVIIth century date shown represent only a small proportion of those preserved. The XVIIIth century has perhaps not got all the space it deserves, but, after all, there are other opportunities to see fine XVIIIth century plate, and it is difficult to find pieces of that period which can be set beside the astonishing series of great vessels made by Paul de Lamerie for the Goldsmiths' Company, all of which will be on show. These last were not made at the cost of melting down earlier plate. They were commissioned by the Company to replace the considerable quantities of plate which had been sacrificed earlier in the XVIIIth century by the Company in order to help through a period of temporary financial stress. The great historian of the English goldsmiths, Sir C. J. Jackson, belonged to a generation which found it difficult to admire the extravagance of the fully developed Rococo taste and he could not bring himself to accept these Lamerie pieces without reservation. Today, when nearly all our creative artists reject the very idea of standards of design or execution, we approach the artistic manifestations of earlier periods with less disposition to criticise, so Lamerie's fantasies are more likely to gain the approval they merit.

Most of the plate on view in Goldsmiths' Hall has not been accessible to the public since the exhibition of works of art belonging to the London Livery Companies held in the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1926. A few pieces were on view last year in the interesting exhibition of English Plate held on the premises of Messrs. Mallett. The importance of this last exhibition was not generally recognised by the art-loving public, but there is now an opportunity for those who missed it to see the far more ambitious exhibition of Historic Plate of the City of London. The term "City of London" has been interpreted in a fairly generous way, and, in addition to the property of the Livery Companies, there will be pieces from the Corporation of the City of London, the Stock Exchange, the Bank of England, the City churches, and other institutions, which have hitherto not revealed to the public the extent of their riches in old English plate.

A final word must be said about the building in which the exhibition has been assembled. There could be no more appropriate place for a show of fine silver than the hall of the ancient guild of the goldsmiths of London, from which such important functions as the hall-marking of silver are still operated and controlled. Damaged in the course of the last war, it has been recently restored to its somewhat pompous splendours—it dates from the 1830's. It now has a fine exhibition room in the design of which the difficult task of fitting an essentially modern organism into a building constructed some 120 years ago has been tackled with considerable skill.

M.A.Q.



Fig. 1. Buffalo in flecked dark green jade. Six Dynasties or T'ang. Raphael bequest.
(By permission of the syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.)

CHINESE JADE AFTER THE HAN DYNASTY

BY WILLIAM WATSON

FROM the end of the Han period¹ in A.D. 220 until the latter part of the Ming dynasty, which lasted from 1368 to 1644, the history of Chinese jade craft is quite obscure. A chronological account even in outline is difficult and in detail impossible. Whereas in the XVIIIth century many pieces are engraved with authentic dates, the age of the earlier jades must be judged almost entirely on their style. Little help is afforded by the analogy of carved lacquer and soapstone, with which carved jade may be best compared, because the dating of work in these substances is equally difficult. Stylistic dating is particularly confused by the custom, prevalent at least from the Sung dynasty (960 to 1279), of copying and more or less freely imitating early work in jade and bronze for the satisfaction of antiquarian taste. The interest of the Chinese antiquarian in early jade was intense, but he was not very critical of the age of his pieces. There is, moreover, a good measure of mystification to be discounted. An example of this seems to be the book called *Ku Yü T'u P'u*, or *Illustrated Catalogue of Ancient Jades*. It purports to be a catalogue of the collection of a Sung emperor, Hsiao

Tsung (1163-1190), but it was not published before the XVIIIth century, appearing first in 1712 and again, enlarged, in 1779 for presentation to the emperor Ch'ien Lung himself, who was celebrated for his love of jade. One cannot help suspecting that the compilation of the book was no earlier than its publication, although it may have drawn to some extent on earlier sources.

The jades which crowd our Western collections are for the most part work of the XVIIIth century. In them the beauty of the material, principally jadeite,² is displayed in a great variety of luxurious paraphernalia: vases, bowls, ewers and cups; pendants, rings, hair-pins and combs; censers and copies of the ritual vessels; screens, writing accessories, seals, bibelots in the shape of auspicious symbols; persons of literature and legend; animals natural and fantastic—altogether a repertoire of all that is charming and banal in traditional Chinese ornament. These XVIIIth century pieces can generally be easily recognised, and many are dated by inscription. Their style answers to the baroque taste of the age. The elaborate animal and vegetable ornament closely

¹An earlier article in *APOLLO*, September, 1950, p. 80, deals with the archaic jades of the period to the end of the Han dynasty. In this article nephrite is described as slightly harder than jadeite instead of slightly softer. Footnote 1 showed the correct relative hardness.

²This was the opinion of P. Pelliot, cf. *T'oung Pao* XXIX (1932), p. 199.

³See *APOLLO*, September, 1950, p. 80, for an account of the sources of jade. The jadeite, mostly monochrome, which predominated in the XVIIIth century, was imported from Burma.



Fig. II. Fabulous animal in brown-grey jade. Sung or Early Ming. Raphael bequest. (British Museum.)



Fig. III. Ram in brown jade. Probably Ming. (British Museum.)

resembles that found carved in other materials, such as lacquer, soapstone, rhinoceros horn and bamboo. It is certain that the jade-carver was greatly influenced by the example of intricate work done in these softer materials, and developed his amazing virtuosity in the effort to copy it. As the taste for naturalistic ornament grew through Ming times to its climax in the XVIIIth century, the jade-carver adopted increasingly elaborate machinery, using accurate drills and a variety of hard steel points⁴ to produce high-relief leaves and tendrils, dragons and all manner of interlacy. The *tour de force* was apt to obtrude, and the uncomfortable effect of work done not in keeping with the medium but in spite of it. A master hand could do beautiful work, but mediocre pieces have the dead elegance of machine-made goods. In spirit the florid style is the antithesis of the lapidary's art—so well exemplified in the archaic jades of the pre-Han period—which delights in low relief, subtle surface effects and delicate small-scale ornament. Through its long history jade carving gradually ceased to be an art akin to gem cutting, became increasingly sculptural, and increasingly took its styles and subjects at second hand.

It is not certain how long the manufacture of small mortuary objects⁵ of jade continued after the end of the IIInd century A.D. By the IIIrd or IVth century these were made of glass, a substance which was then becoming cheap and plentiful for the first time in China. Jade carving may have suffered a decline in the troubled centuries which followed the collapse of the Han empire. There are some elegant belt-hooks with a dragon-head terminal and a plain or fluted bow which may fall into these early centuries; but the type is almost perennial in China. Even in T'ang times (618-906) no larger pieces are found comparable, for example, to bowls of the IVth century, B.C., decorated in the style of contemporary bronzes, which were excavated at Chin Ts'un in Honan, or to the elaborately worked ritual pieces of Han date. The Imperial Japanese treasure of the VIIIth century preserved in the Shosoin at Nara⁶ includes

some jades—like the bulk of this collection almost certainly imported from China—which are strikingly plain and technically unambitious. The largest piece is an oval bowl on a ring-foot and with slightly upturned ends, and another is a plain sword-guard, both of milk-white jade.

The only jades of this period well documented by excavation are those found in the tomb of Wang Chien, murderer of the last T'ang emperor Chao Tsung, who ruled in Szechwan from 903 to 918. According to the published account,⁷ they consist of two books of fifty-three leaves, a *pi*⁸, a seal, and, more important than the rest, seven square and one oblong plaque which had been attached to a belt. The square plaques are each decorated in low relief with the same design of a coiled dragon, a precursor of the Ming form of this creature. A larger version of the dragon also appears on the oblong plaque, which bears an inscription dated A.D. 915. Judging from the illustrated rubbings the work is of good quality, and shows that jade carving flourished at least in the latter part of the T'ang.

Still more interesting are some fine figurines, some of the best of them in this country, to which early dates are assigned on comparatively firm stylistic grounds. Two of the best known are the reclining water-buffalo (Fig. I) and the horse's head⁹ bequeathed to the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, by the late Oscar Raphael. They are said to have belonged formerly to the Imperial collection in the Winter Palace at Peking, and to have been catalogued there as of Han date.¹⁰ These two pieces are both well conceived in the round, but carved in contrasting styles. The horse is strongly stylized, while the buffalo has a conscientious naturalism closely comparable to some T'ang earthenware figurines. A splendid earthenware standing buffalo formerly in the *Museum fuer Voelkerkunde*, Berlin,¹¹ makes an interesting comparison with the same animal in jade, bringing out the identity of intention in the two pieces and the greater

⁴For an excellent account of the technique of jade carving, see S. H. Hansford, *Chinese Jade Carving*, London, 1950.

⁵APOLLO, September, 1950, p. 88.

⁶The Shosoin, a building of the Todaiji Temple at Nara, the ancient capital of Japan, contains intact a vast collection, consisting chiefly of Chinese products formerly belonging to the Emperor Shomu. His wife dedicated the treasure to the Temple on his death in 756.

⁷Cheng Te-k'un, the Royal Tomb of Wang Chien, *Harvard J.A.S.* VIII (1945), pp. 235-410. M. Sullivan, Excavation of the Royal Tomb of Wang Chien, *Trans. Or. Cer. Soc.*, Vol. 23 (1947-8), pp. 17-26. The material from this tomb was formerly in Chengtu Museum.

⁸The ritual jades are described in the earlier article.

⁹Chinese Exhibition Commemorative Catalogue, London, 1936, pl. 48, No. 530.

¹⁰The buffalo and horse are said to have been brought in about 1420 to Peking when it was made the capital by Emperor Yung-Lo (1403-1425). They were already regarded as sacred objects and were used annually in a festival.

¹¹L. Ashton and B. Gray. *Chinese Art*, pl. 29.



Fig. IV. Dragon ring of brown and green mottled jade. Probably Sung. (*British Museum.*)

success of the clay-modeller. Probably the jade-carver was copying direct from an earthenware piece. The jade buffalo can hardly be earlier in date than the more advanced of the earthenware figurines and probably belongs to the period between the Vth and IXth centuries. By the same token a pair of charming small female figures in the collection of Mrs. Walter Sedgwick¹² may be earlier, since they resemble clay tomb figurines of acknowledged Han date. These have an economy of treatment which is a pleasing concession to the intractable jade. The same may be said of the horse's head from the Raphael collection, referred to above, where the stark

¹²L. Ashton and B. Gray.

linear treatment of the bone structure is in keeping with the toughness of the medium. For this piece a date in the period of the Six Dynasties (220-589) is probable.

Another group of ornamental figures, simply carved and often quaintly unreal, have a characteristic in common which is best described as respect for the shape of the original pebble of jade. The animal may be recognisable as a horse, a bear, a crouching elephant, or it may be a fantastic creature like the three-legged moon toad. When they have an appropriate antique air such pieces are traditionally accorded a Sung or early Ming date, their style being thought to place them between the naturalism of the clay tomb figurines and the fanciful forms of the mythological animals which prevailed later. These pieces are generally carved in the variegated dark green or brown jade commonly used before the copious supply of Burmese jadeite in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries increased the demand for jades of pure colour. The dragon of Fig. II is in this tradition of sophisticated simplicity, although here the detail is more elaborate. Fig. III represents a large class of more realistic animal figures which are mostly ascribed to the Ming period. Small summary carvings of squat ducks and hares are also common and rats and small dogs occur. They are usually of brownish jade and are often accorded a Ming or even a Sung date, though not on very clear grounds. In the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries large realistic carvings of animals are less common than the creatures of myth, but an occasional realistic subject such as the delightful life-like monkeys in the collection of Mrs. Emma Joseph¹³ show what could be achieved in this manner outside the stock repertoire.

Another broad division of jades comprises the numerous pieces which draw their inspiration from the bronze vessels of ancient Chinese religious ritual and the styles of decoration associated with them. The reproduction in jade of these vessels began, as far as we can tell,

¹³Chinese Exhibition Comm. Cat., London, 1936, pl. 52, No. 2887.



Fig. V. Kuei of grey jade. Ming. (*British Museum.*)



Fig. VI. Vase of greenish-white jade. XVIIIth century. Hilton Bequest. (British Museum.)

sometime in the Sung dynasty, and is a reflection of the official revival of Confucian doctrine in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries. A renewed interest arose at this time in traditional native ceremonies and their appurtenances. By training the Confucian scholar was an antiquarian, and to Confucians jade remained the most venerable of substances. The ritual vessels of the pre-Han feudal period—which were now studied and collected—were not, however, always closely imitated. Provided the forms and decoration of cups and bowls alluded even remotely to the culture of the ancient kings, they were popular as symbols of the creed and taste of the official class.

Unfortunately authenticated early examples of these



Fig. VII. Cup of light grey jade. XVIIIth or early XIXth century. Hilton Bequest. (British Museum.)

antiquarian jades are rare. An example for which a Sung date was claimed is a libation cup exhibited by the Chinese Government in the Burlington House Exhibition of 1936.¹⁴ The decoration of this piece, rendered in shallow incised line with rounded edges is reminiscent of patterns found on bronzes in the late Chou period, though it does not follow them closely and shows neglect or ignorance of their tectonic principles. The commoner libation cups depart still further from ancient models but still include ancient *motifs* in their decoration. They are usually of grey or grey-flecked jade with a mat surface and adorned in high relief with archaic newt-like dragons. The grey mat surface of the jade itself seems to be regarded by Chinese connoisseurs as a sign of early work. The bold serpentine forms of the dragons are always treated with an easy balance, being carved partly in the round and even serving as handles. If the walls of the cups bear any decoration in addition to the dragons, it is a lightly embossed pattern derived from the ancient bronze. Besides cups and bowls, rather fanciful versions were made of the ritual objects called *pi*, *ts'ung*, etc.¹⁵ The coiled dragon of Fig. IV is perhaps intended to represent the ancient arc-shaped dragon-like pendant which is possibly to be identified with the *huang* of the scriptures. It is an outstanding piece, carved in beautiful russet and green jade with a rare assurance of design and execution, and must belong to an early phase of the mediaeval antiquarianism we have been discussing.¹⁵

The larger ritual vessels were also imitated, with a more or less strict fidelity to general shape and with ornament kept more or less within the bounds of the archaic repertory, although the ensemble might be novel. Some of this work was capable of recapturing the solid dignity of ancient pieces (Fig. V). From late Ming times onwards a favourite subject was an incense burner in the form of a pedestal bowl with domed lid, the latter often crowned with a Ming-style dragon or the *Fo* lion-dog borrowed from Buddhist lore. In the XVIIIth century these vessels might be of imposing size and fantastic elaboration, sometimes entirely covered with lotus petals (floral ornament thus encroaching rather

¹⁴As above, pl. 50, No. 2795.

¹⁵cf. W. Winkworth in *Chinese Art, Burlington Magazine Monograph*, 1925. The author refers this piece to the Sung period. In his "Scythian Art" (English translation, London, 1928), Borovka dates it "Han?" because of the resemblance of the head to forms of the Siberian and Ordos animal style. It is certainly not so early.



Fig. VIII. Cup of veined grey jade, probably a brush-washer, in the forms of a lotus leaf, bud and flower. XVIIIth century. Eumorfopoulos Collection. (British Museum.)

incongruously on the archaizing style) or fretted in key patterns, and they were usually carved in exquisite pure jadeite. These vessels are typical of the jades worked by craftsmen attached to the imperial palace in Peking. They often bear the engraved seal of Ch'ien Lung, properly a sign (or so it is believed) that the piece is a specially distinguished product of the imperial workshop, and intended for the collection of the emperor himself.¹⁶ A characteristic innovation found on the incense-burners is a pair of confronted dragons supporting an ideograph of auspicious meaning. Free-hanging ring handles, evidence of virtuosity more satisfying, it may be thought, to the jade-carver than to his customer, might appear *un peu partout* on bowl or vase (Fig. VI).

The category of jades illustrating Buddhist and Taoist themes was popular from Ming times onwards, a reflection in art of the religious and domestic tastes of the mercantile, non-Confucian middle class. By the XVIIIth century such purely ornamental pieces are as numerous as those associated with the Confucian tradition.

The Buddhist symbols known as the eight auspicious signs from the footprint of Buddha—lotus, wheel of the law, swastika, mystic knot, pair of fishes, jar and conch-shell—are carved singly or used as elements of decoration. The *Fo* dog, a Chinese version of the Buddhist lion temple-guardian (usually shown playing with a brocaded ball symbolising the faith) joins the indigenous mythical animals of China. Buddha himself is occasionally portrayed, but far more popular is Kuan-Yin, the female Bodhisattva who dominated Chinese Buddhism as a Goddess of Mercy. Painting of the Sung and Ming dynasties provided models for the portrayal of the eighteen Lohan, semi-mythical disciples of Buddha, shown as unkempt ascetics, with stern and haggard features appropriate to their magical powers. Another popular figure is big-bellied Pu-tai ("cloth-bag"), the

"laughing monk," usually shown with his calico bag at his feet. The carving of all these subjects begins sometime in the mid-Ming period, both in jade and soapstone. It flourished especially in the XVIIIth century and continues to the present day.

The portrayal of Taoist subjects is also traced back to the Ming dynasty. Commonest are the talismans of longevity, the bat, the crane, the stag, the peach and the fungus of immortality. The butterfly, the cicada, the three-legged toad in the moon, the moon-hare pounding simples in a mortar, and the five poisons—lizard, snake, toad, spider and centipede—are symbols associated with the Taoist quest for an elixir of life. The eight immortal Taoist sages, and Shou Hsing, the god of longevity, each with his appropriate attributes, are perhaps most usual of all.¹⁷ A charming subject from Taoist myth is the miniature landscapes representing the hill of jade towering into the clouds from the Happy Island of the eastern sea, on which the immortals live forever consuming their magic food and drink. These pieces appear not to have been made before the XVIIIth century, and in manner resemble other landscape scenes carved on tablets of jade in low relief, usually illustrating a poem which is engraved alongside. The lines of the design and the characters on these latter pieces are sometimes gilded.

To these groups of symbolic jades, the religious connection of which is more or less remote, must be added the bibelots of the scholar, including figures of Wen Ch'ang, the astral god of literature, who dwells in a part of the Great Bear. Favourite symbols of literary and official success, appearing on table-ornaments, brush holders, seals, paper-weights and the like, are the carp and acacia boughs (Fig. VIII).

Outside China only the Moghul emperors of India could boast of jades comparable in beauty and skill to those of the Chinese craftsmen, and it is still a debated question how far, if at all, the Indian courts were indebted to China for the marvellously thin and graceful

¹⁶It is curious that reign-marks such as Yung-Lo (1403-24), Hsuan-Te (1426-35), both found on pottery and lacquer, and the latter on bronzes also, do not appear on jade, either as an authentic or spurious dating. Next to nothing is known of the jade carvers individually. The *T'ao Lu*, speaking of the reproduction in porcelain of carvings in ivory, shell, bamboo, jade and cornelian, mentions the work in jade of one Lu Tzu-kung, who was apparently working sometime in the XVIIIth century.

¹⁷The lore of the subjects depicted in jade is dealt with at some length in S. C. Nott, *Chinese Jade*, London, 1936.



Fig. IX. White jade vase. XVIIIth century. (By permission of the Barber Institute of Fine Arts.)

bowls and cups made for them in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. The history of Indian jade is virtually unexplored. Examples in our collections suggest that the Indian craft was aesthetically and technically independent of China. The Indian style seems, however, to have been familiar to the Chinese. In the XVIIIth century one section of Ch'ien Lung's palace workshops is said to have produced jades of the kind called *hsi fan tso* ('Tibetan,' i.e., a Western style). These were mostly bowls of white jade encrusted with rubies, amethysts, lapis lazuli, and netted with incised gilded lines, a treatment of jade well known in India. The typical Indian jade bowls, cups and boxes, plain or decorated with symmetrically stylised patterns of leaves and flowers in flat, low relief—utterly different in feeling from Chinese vegetable and animal ornament—have slight irregularities in their surfaces producing an effect of softness and delicacy quite unlike the brilliance and hardness of the Chinese finish.¹⁸ We know that Chinese craftsmen visited the Moghul court, but in so far as these contacts produced lasting results China seems to have been the influenced party. Fig. X illustrates a

beautiful example¹⁹ of what must be regarded as the Indian style. Such pieces are frequently exhibited as Chinese, and some of them may indeed have been made in China. They have a simplicity and restraint which are rare in Chinese work of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries.



Fig. X. Cup of grey jade. XVIIth or XVIIIth century. (By permission of the National Museum, Copenhagen.)

¹⁸Good examples of Indian jades are to be found in the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum. In the latter are two pieces dated 1618-19 and 1647.

¹⁹Exhibited in the Kunindustrimuseum, April, 1950, Catalogue No. 142, pl. XXX.



Fig. I. Dessert Dish. 9 ins. long. Moulded rococo scrolls and basketwork sides. Probably an early Chelsea-Derby piece, c. 1770-1775. Mark, "D" intersected by an anchor in gold.

The Chelsea-Derby Table Wares

BY FRANKLIN A. BARRETT

IN the year 1770, William Duesbury, proprietor of the Derby China Works, purchased the factory at Chelsea after Sprimont's retirement, and carried on the works for the next fourteen years in conjunction with his Derby venture.

Duesbury's productions of this period are known by the generic name of Chelsea-Derby, the name doubtless reflecting the uncertainty as to which were the products of the Derby works and which of Chelsea.

We are here concerned with the excellent table-ware made under Duesbury's direction between 1770 and 1784. Most of these are marked with the Chelsea-Derby mark of a script capital "D" in gold, intersected by an anchor, so that few problems of identification arise. Nevertheless there has been much speculation as to where this porcelain was actually made, and in this connection there seems to be no good reason why the mark should not equally well signify "Duesbury Chelsea." We shall see in a moment that good grounds exist for believing that these table-ware were, in all probability, made at the Chelsea establishment.

It was Mr. Honey who first suggested that most, if not

all, the productions bearing the Chelsea-Derby mark were made at Chelsea, and there is abundant evidence of continued practices which lend colour to this theory. The greenish glaze, for example, found on the later Chelsea porcelain, continued to be used on the Chelsea-Derby wares, and was often laid on thickly, too, so that foot-rims had to be ground down. Then there is the continued use of the Chelsea moulds; also the rococo style which persisted for a time, as in the case of the dessert dish shown in Figs. I and II. An example of the long-continued use of the old Chelsea moulds is furnished by the large moulded dish illustrated in Fig. III; raised-anchor dishes of exactly similar shape are not uncommon and one, of raised- or red-anchor period, was in the collection of the late Dr. and Mrs. Bellamy Gardner and is illustrated in Honey's *English Pottery and Porcelain*, Plate XII(c).

The Chelsea decorators had a practice of concealing small flaws in the body and glaze of the ware by painting small insects and butterflies over them, and this habit was carried over into the early years of Duesbury's



Fig. II. A side view of the dessert dish shown in Fig. I. 9 ins. long.

management. Several instances of it are to be seen on the dish already mentioned (Fig. I), where the veining of butterflies' wings cunningly coincides with firing cracks—to which the earlier and thicker moulded productions appear to have been prone—and glaze bubbles are hidden by red ladybirds.

These rococo pieces represent a continuance of the earlier Chelsea tradition, though now allied to a semi-classical decoration, and they must date from the early Chelsea-Derby days. Later on, shapes became simpler, with fluted sides to cups, scalloped rims, and some flower and foliage moulding in low relief (Fig. IV). Another pointer to a Chelsea origin is the occasional occurrence of a gold anchor mark alone, without the "D"; it seems unlikely that the Derby factory would have placed such a mark on their wares at this time, though it has to be admitted that there are anomalies in the marks, such as a crowned anchor on a dish decorated with an all-over "bleu-de-roi" enamel ground—a sign of a late production—in the Derby Museum.

The form and decoration of the Chelsea-Derby table wares are invariably in good taste, and associated well with the contemporary Georgian furnishings. Mr. Honey (*English Pottery and Porcelain*) has written of Duesbury's table porcelain of this period: "It is one of the most notable achievements in English ceramic art. . . . They are William Duesbury's title to fame." This is high praise, but is certainly not unmerited.

For sheer dignity and grace it would be hard to equal the teapot shown in Fig. V. Both body and glaze come as near perfection as one could desire. The decoration, charming and restrained, does not obscure the rich, milky glaze. Its designer has permitted himself the extravagance of a delightful shell-moulding on the upper side of the spout, another beneath, and a handle of the utmost elegance divided into two spreading branches that firmly grip the body of the pot. To give height to the globular shape is an exquisite cone-shaped knob, moulded with scale pattern and touched out in turquoise and gilt. The scroll painting is puce, and the garlands of flowers are in blue-green monochrome.

The colour palette used in the decoration of these wares was soft though varied. Turquoise, puce, pink, light blue, a clear yellow, and a rather strong orange-red are the usual colours, together with leaf-green and the

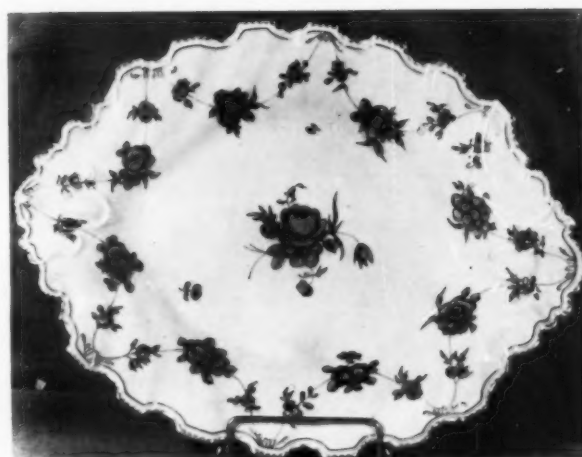


Fig. III. Moulded dish. 12½ ins. long. Made from a mould which was used by the Chelsea factory in the 1750's. Pieces of similar form have the raised- and red-anchor marks. Decorated in green monochrome and gilding. Chelsea-Derby gold mark.

blue-green already mentioned. An inferior version of the claret-ground of Chelsea appears occasionally, usually uneven in tone, and also a rich underglaze mazarine-blue. These ground-colours were used by Duesbury mainly in panels and borders accompanied by richly tooled and chased gilding.

Later in the Chelsea-Derby period a bright blue enamel was introduced in imitation of the "bleu-de-roi" of Sèvres, and this was evidently much prized, for it continued in use for a very long time. Used sparingly, with fine gilding, it was extremely striking. It can, however, become somewhat overpowering when used to excess. A class of jugs, with globose bodies and reeded necks invariably show a border of this colour, and the well known and important, 1779 dated, "Cooper's Company" punch bowl in the Schreiber collection has a broad band of it with gold interlacings.

The main theme of the Chelsea-Derby decoration was a moderate formalism, borrowed from Sèvres, in which the severity of classical *motifs* such as vases, trophies, wreaths and medallions, was tempered by colourful floral garlands, which to some may appear unduly sentimental

THE CHELSEA-DERBY TABLE WARES

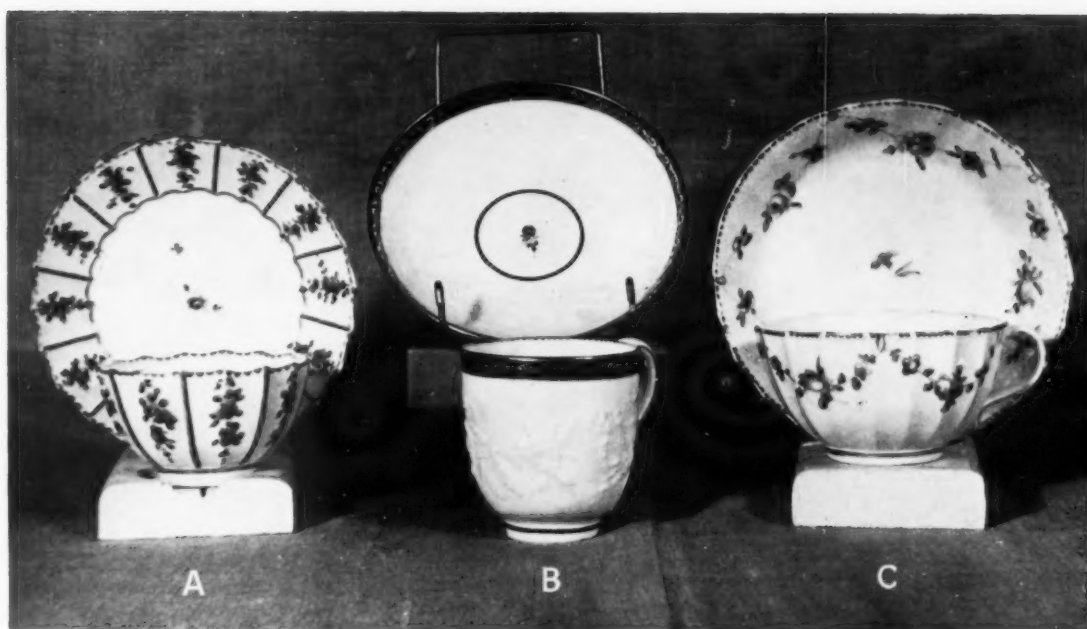


Fig. IV. A group of cups and saucers. All of moulded form and all with Chelsea-Derby gold mark, save the saucer (a) which is unmarked.



Fig. V. Teapot and cover. Height 7 ins. Decorated with green monochrome festoons, puce and turquoise, with gilding. Chelsea-Derby gold mark.



Fig. VI. Plate. 7½ ins. diameter. Central painting of a classical urn or vase in grey monochrome with coloured flower garlands. Chelsea-Derby gold mark.

with their preponderance of pink roses. It would, perhaps, be a fair summing up to say that the balance was fairly held between a rigid classical formalism and excessive sentimentality.

The painting of individual flowers shows no particular skill; sometimes they are outlined with black pencilling, especially in the case of the green monochrome painting. A general effect of grace and elegance was aimed at and, indeed, successfully achieved.

Classical vases and trophies of arms and musical instruments painted *en grisaille*, together with garlands of flowers and leaves were popular, and cameo medallions bearing profile portraits in white with grey pencilling and shading, on a brown ground, were also a frequent form of decoration (Fig. I). The latter was, perhaps, derived from Vienna and Tournai where similar themes were commonly used.

In the space available it is obviously impossible to show all the types of decoration which are found on the Chelsea-Derby table-ware, but a number have been chosen which are representative of the period, both early and late.

The dessert dish of Figs. I and II has already been mentioned as combining rococo and classical styles. The profiles are on a brown ground, which did not fire too well, the husk-pattern festoons are light green, the fruiting vine, finely painted, has leaves outlined in black, the grapes being blue with a purple bloom. The insects are brightly coloured, orange-red, yellow, and blue being prominent. The rococo handles are outlined in tur-

quoise and gilt and the sides of the dish are moulded with graceful, sweeping, rococo curves, and basketwork. The piece is rather thickly potted, with a creamy translucency and many flecks and patches; where the body is thinner the glaze gives a green colour by transmitted light.

Fig. III is the large dish from an early Chelsea mould referred to earlier; it is decorated in green monochrome and gilding, a style used also at Bristol.

Cups and saucers of various types are shown in Figs. IV and VII. These are always delicately potted and are often gracefully fluted and scalloped. Fig. IV(a) has vertical deep pink lines and dark green foliage which is continued on the reverse of the saucer (see Fig. VIIb). The elegant tea-cup and saucer of Fig. IVc has chains of pink, puce, blue and yellow flowers, hung from gilt rings and a beautiful handle, whilst the central cup and saucer of this group has the "bleu-de-roi" border, and an unusual moulded pattern of flowers, foliage, and birds, perhaps slightly reminiscent of the early "sprigged" ware.

Fig. VIIa is a copy of the popular Worcester "Queen Charlotte" pattern of alternate red-on-white and blue-on-white whorls. In the Chelsea-Derby version slight foliate mouldings spring from the base, the blue is the rich, underglaze, mazarine blue, and the glossy, rich glaze distinguishes it from the Worcester product. This is a breakaway from the typical Chelsea-Derby decoration in Sèvres style, the pattern enjoyed such a measure of popularity that, no doubt, Duesbury felt impelled to take advantage of it. Another Worcester pattern frequently

THE CHELSEA-DERBY TABLE WARES



Fig. VIII. Showing decoration carried over to the back of saucers. (a) Is the saucer of Fig. VIIb, and (b) that of Fig. IVa.



Fig. VII. Cups and saucers. (a) Copy of Worcester "Queen Charlotte" pattern; (b) Part of a service made in 1784 for the Duchess of Devonshire. Both have the Chelsea-Derby gold mark.

used by Derby was in Japanese style, with dragons in red on a white ground, alternating with blue panels and gilding.

The cup and saucer of Fig. VIIb is a late production of the period, and is from a service made for the Duchess of Devonshire as a wedding present for Mary Babington, who married the Rev. Thomas Gisburne, of Derby, in 1784. The Babingtons and the Gisburnes were well known Derbyshire families. The radial lines are gilt and the classical vase is painted *en grisaille*. The flowers being somewhat heavily clumped together lack the charm of the smaller festooned flowers. On the back of the saucer (Fig. VIII) the painter has let himself go and has scattered sprigs of roses and other flowers gaily about the base, a most unusual feature.

The large wavy edge plate (Fig. VI) is typical of that happy alliance of formal classical *motif* with the joyous

freedom of colourful flower garlands. The gilding is most richly tooled and chased.

It remains to mention a class of fruit baskets with openwork sides and applied florets, with double, rope-twist handles. These are generally painted in the soft, Chelsea-Derby palette with flower sprays, though some, of identical form, have underglaze-blue Oriental landscapes and a fish-roe diaper border. The latter may be of the Chelsea-Derby period, or they may be earlier; an example is illustrated in Fisher's *English Blue and White Porcelain*, Plate 13a. It is interesting to note that these baskets have the same oblique reeded foot seen on the dish shown in Fig. II.

In 1784 William Duesbury closed the works at Chelsea and the manufacture was concentrated at Derby; he died two years later and was succeeded by his son, William Duesbury II. A considerable number of specimens of table-ware, bearing the same patterns as the Chelsea-Derby marked wares, are marked with the crowned "D" in puce or blue, and, as Mr. Honey says, it is tempting to believe that this marks the transfer to Derby. However, that remains to be proved; some overlapping is not improbable.

The classic Chelsea-Derby style did not, however, survive for long after the death of Duesbury I. A new policy soon became evident, by which the porcelain served the same purpose as the canvas of the artist in another medium. The naturalistic painting of landscapes (almost photographic in their reality), prodigal flower groups and other subjects superseded what was, perhaps, the more decorative and, dare we add, the more suitable semi-formalism that brought fame to the founder of the Derby China Manufactory.

In conclusion I wish to express my thanks to Mr. A. L. Thorp, Curator of the Derby Museum and Art Gallery, for providing facilities for photographing specimens in the Derby Museum Collection, from which all my illustrations are taken.



Fig. I. Oval-shaped Tea Caddy. Sheraton pattern, c. 1780.

FRIENDLY LITTLE PIECES

BY CAPT. JACK GILBEY

WHEN the home is at last suitably furnished with the larger and more important pieces, it is time enough to turn one's attention to the less useful objects which can help so much to brighten the hall and the rooms as well as express the individuality of their owner.

Our hall door would never remain open on its own and had a tiresome habit of swinging to unless some object was placed against it. A door stop of some kind was the obvious solution. One day I came across an attractive pair of pewter door stops, c. 1800, in the shape of horses with flowing manes and tails, 12 inches in width and 10 inches high. For a long time one of these remained in the hall, but the other horse was lonely and out of a job, so the pair were eventually promoted to the drawing-room, where they now adorn a somewhat featureless fireplace. Pewter has one advantage that besides looking nice it does not require constant cleaning. Another little gadget now stands against the door in the hall.

Old brass fenders can be very attractive, but one does not want too many in a house as they require regular cleaning if they are to look their best. The smaller they are, the greater is the demand it seems, and for a tiny one of charming design measuring only 32 inches in width and 9 inches high, with the necessary irons, c. 1800, I had to pay 11 guineas. Later I was able to find another in a shop in Cambridge of a similar width but with no irons to go with it, for which I was charged £7. I was told in this shop that they were very hard to come by and that

I was lucky to find one as brass fenders were selling like hot cakes to go to America.

I wonder where all the small fire bellows have gone? One does not see many about these days. The old ones of Sheraton pattern are scarce, and I was glad when I found one in an antique shop in London. It had been damaged but was well repaired and was in working order. I have found it useful on several mornings in the winter to put an extra spark of life into damp paper and wood, and safer than getting down on one's knees to blow.

A foot-stool is, I suppose, an old man's comfort, but when I came across a pair, c. 1845, 13 inches square and 7 inches high and attractively covered in grey, I thought they would do for my two bergère chairs which are in the drawing-room. These were in excellent condition and moderately priced.

A barometer is always a friendly and useful possession and there was just room for a small one in the hall next to the clock. Eventually I found one of the late Sheraton period and of the right size in a village near my home. This one measures 3 feet in length and its circumference is 10 inches (Fig. II). The dial is easy to read, above which there is a thermometer occupying a vertical space of 1 foot.

Mention of barometers always reminds me of a good story which my father used to enjoy telling. On a certain morning when the butler called him, he asked him to let him know what the glass was doing. The butler went down to the hall, took the barometer from off the wall and, carrying it in a horizontal position, was soon

FRIENDLY LITTLE PIECES



Fig. II. Barometer, late Sheraton period, 3 ft. high, circumference 10 in.

back in my father's bedroom. "You have a look, Sir," he said. "I don't understand these instruments very well." As might be expected, the reading for that morning was not very satisfactory!

In some clubs I have seen a notice, "This barometer is set daily. Will members please refrain from tapping it." A wise course this to adopt, with every barometer, as the violent start that the needle receives each time it gets a sharp tap is not conducive to accurate reading.

A flash of pleasing colour can be given to a room by the addition of a Sèvres jardinière. I have one that has



Fig. III. Fruitwood caddy pumpkin, polished green, c. 1800.



Fig. IV. Sheraton tea caddy with shaped raised lid, c. 1780.

a criss-cross pattern of hedge-sparrow blue, inside which are pink roses; it has a gilded base and handles. The bowl is 10 inches across and 9 inches high. It is an early one, c. 1765. With these ornaments care should be taken that if they stand on valuable furniture they should rest

on a wooden support of some kind with an underneath covering of baize.

A small antique table resting on a fine Persian rug in a window alcove makes a pleasing composition, but a Persian rug is a very expensive item, and for a little one 4 feet by 3 feet of lovely quality I had to pay 25 guineas—this was at an auction.

I should feel lost in my study without a clock. It is worth paying a little extra for a good one, as correct time-keeping is essential. I have a small bracket-clock 10 inches high and 7 inches at the base, c. 1800, which usually stands upon a Queen Anne walnut knee-hole desk in my study. If I stop writing to look at it I am surprised at the loud tick it makes for so small a clock, but on all other occasions I am completely oblivious of it.

I have but one tea caddy in my collection. It was some time before I decided to buy one and I remember taking it home with pride. It was then that a situation

Sheraton type, which I am told was generally made by the apprentices to the trade who, in 1780, were paid only a few pence per day, so that it was possible at that time to buy one for a few shillings, very different indeed to present prices.

Fig. IV illustrates a Sheraton tea caddy with a beautifully shaped raised lid. This is a rare specimen of fine quality, c. 1780.

Fig. III shows a fruitwood caddy pumpkin, polished green colour, c. 1800. These caddies were also made in the shape of apples and pears and, unlike the other caddies, always have iron escutcheons; the prices are always high. They are finding favour at the present time with the Americans.

Fig. VII depicts one of a pair of Sheraton tea caddies, c. 1780, inlaid and in mint condition. Since they are a pair, the value is considerably more than would be required for a single piece.



Fig. V.

Small fire bellows, Sheraton pattern.

Foot-stool. One of a pair, c. 1845, 13 in. square by 7 in. high.

Pewter Horse.

arose that I had not thought of before. Where was I to place it? In vain I put it on various pieces of furniture—on the piano, on the mantelpiece—but it was no good, it looked right on none of them. Eventually it found a resting place on a sideboard between two water-colour drawings, and there it is at the present moment because I can find nowhere more suitable. I wonder why it is that these innocent-looking tea caddies are so hard to place? I think perhaps that mine is rather too light in tone, being made of satinwood, and this colour does not blend well even with faded mahogany.

A friend of mine, a collector of antiques, had several of these attractive caddies, and I remember when I saw them he had them all grouped together. They were all fine specimens, and I felt that as I looked at them, a "cluster of caddies"—if such a description is permissible—is really an excellent way to display them.

For the beginner who is interested I would advise caution in the buying of this class of antique. A rare specimen at, say, £15 to £20 is preferable to three at the same price. The demand for those at £5 and less is very small indeed, whereas one of unusual shape and design will always have some commercial value.

Fig. I shows the tea caddy in my collection. Of simple design, it has inlays of darker wood at the top and bottom and on the body, while the lid features a shell which is prettily executed. It is a good example of oval

Those who enjoy looking at beautiful things and fine craftsmanship will certainly find it in these fascinating little pieces, and they are small indeed, as the measurements of Fig. I, the largest of the illustrations, is but 4½ inches high by 5½ inches in width, but they must realise they are a luxury in a collection of antiques, as I should imagine few, if any, are used now for the purpose for which they were originally intended.

A dealer of my acquaintance tells me that many Americans buy them with the object of converting them into cigarette boxes—for which purpose they are easily adaptable.

How patience and diligent searching can be rewarded is shown by the following story.

Recently I was staying with my brother, an ardent collector of antiques, and I noticed that he had a pair of very attractive octagonal tortoiseshell and silver tea caddies. These were 4½ inches in height and of a similar width at the base and were probably about a hundred years old. One of them had belonged to my mother and I have always understood was given to her in 1886 as a wedding present. The other one he had found in an antique shop in the West End of London in 1944. A minute examination had shown that both the caddies bore the same silver mark, were by the same maker, and were identical in all other details. It seems beyond all doubt they had once been a pair and that now after a period of

FRIENDLY LITTLE PIECES



Fig. VI. Sèvres jardinière, 10 in. across by 9 in. high, c. 1765.



Fig. VII. One of a pair. Inlaid Sheraton tea caddy.



Fig. VIII. Brass fender, 32 in. wide by 9 in. high, c. 1800, and small bracket clock, 10 in. high, with 7 in. base, c. 1800.

58 years they were once again to be happily united.

With the exception of the clock, all the objects that I have mentioned are non-essentials. We can get along quite well without them, but believe me they are friendly little pieces and they will make just that little difference to our personal comfort and happiness if we are fortunate enough to possess them.

• • •

COVER PLATE

IN this centenary year we may well pay homage to Joseph Mallord William Turner, and "Crossing the Brook" in the Tate Gallery is justly held to be one of his master works, a peak of that period when he was pitting his genius against that of the fashionable Claude. It was painted in 1815, a souvenir of that tour of Devonshire which was one of the almost human interludes in the artist's unsocial life. The night before he sketched the scene he had sat talking in an inn with a Mr. Redding until after midnight, then he put his head down on the wooden table and went soundly to sleep. He woke before dawn and went straight out to watch the effects of light, and as the sun rose made the sketch which eventually became "Crossing the Brook."

These factual circumstances, as well as his preoccupation at that time with the classicism of Claude and Richard Wilson, have to be remembered as we consider the picture. Ruskin criticised it for lacking colour; but that wonderful visual memory which Turner had probably held the scene as an early morning one when the long shadows which still dominated the landscape were cold. It is, we must allow, a view of England seen in the Italian manner. Turner had not yet been to Italy, and that manner is a pastiche of those of the artists against whom he had measured himself in rivalry. In the evolution of his own art it was one of the last works built on tone rather than colour. Already he had achieved the wonder of "The Sun rising through Vapour," and for the first time in oils achieved what he wanted: the painting of light rather than of objects. "Crossing the Brook" may thus be said to be the culmination of a period in Turner's career. It is a magnificently "made" picture: the perfection of talent. One may be justified in regarding that sun which, rising, touches the treetops, as symbolic of the dawning genius destined to blaze in the work of this man who died one hundred years ago.

WELSH LOVE SPOONS

MR. E. H. PINTO, in his interesting article on "Wooden Love Spoons," states that the earliest dated spoon known to him is a spoon of the XVIIIth century in the National Museum of Wales (Welsh Folk Museum) Collection. The Welsh Folk Museum, however, has in its collection a spoon dated 1667 (Fig. I). The exact provenance of this spoon is unknown, but from its type I judge it to be from North Wales.

The specimens in the Welsh Folk Collection prove, I think, that some types were associated with certain localities. For instance, spoons with "dolphin" stems and "crooked" spoons invariably come from Caernarvonshire. Fig. II illustrates both characteristics, one of the essentials being that the tip of the bowl and of the handle, as well as the highest point of the stem, be in a straight line.

A type of spoon associated with Pembrokeshire is the large panelled variety, principally with key-hole and heart decoration. The panel is often in two parts (see Fig. III) joined by wooden links.

IORWERTH C. PEATE.

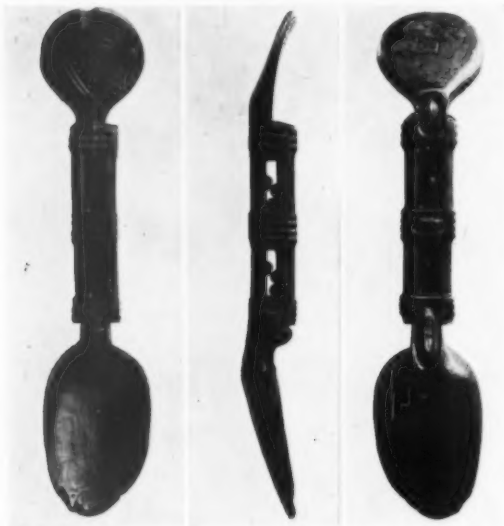
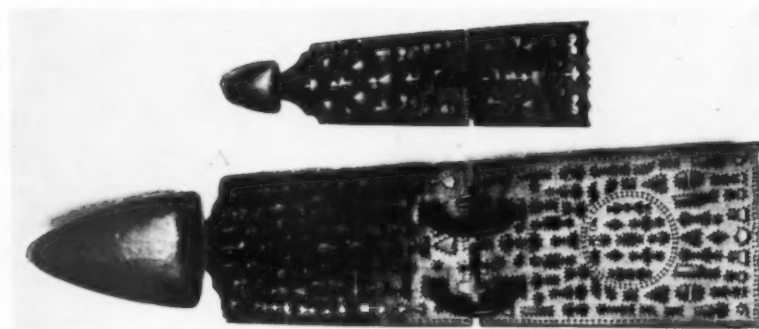


Fig. I (left, above).
Spoon dated (on the back) 1667. Front, side and back views. Probably from North Wales. By courtesy of National Museum of Wales (Welsh Folk Museum).

Fig. II (right, above).
Crooked spoon with dolphin-shaped stem from Caernarvonshire. By courtesy of National Museum of Wales (Welsh Folk Museum).

Fig. III (left).
Two spoons from Pembrokeshire. Length of larger spoon, 27 in. By courtesy of National Museum of Wales (Welsh Folk Museum).



Dear Sir,—I read with the greatest interest the article "The Age of Elegance" by Mr. Martin A. Buckmaster.

It is eminently fitting that a journal of your standing should publish Mr. Buckmaster's challenge. Why, indeed, should perfection of sanitation breed imperfection of design, lauding the functional at the expense of that beauty which the fine illustrations to the article so perfectly exemplify?

An age of elegance, indeed, but, may I add—in contra-distinction to the strident tones of Mr. Buckmaster's "Tubular horrors"—an age also of repose!

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
H. VEZEY STRONG.

The Editor,
APOLLO.

Sir,—The Chester City Council is proposing to hold a special exhibition of original paintings and drawings of bygone Chester in the Town Hall during the months of July and August.

I would be very pleased to hear of any such works in private possession which the owners would be willing to lend to the Corporation for this special Festival exhibition and to be informed of the subject matter and approximate size of each picture in the first instance. If there are any unframed works we shall be pleased to have them framed in Chester. Great care would be taken of them, they would be fully insured during the course of the exhibition and all transport charges would be paid.

The pictures in which we are most interested are those which show the older buildings of Chester. Original works only are required as we already have a very complete local collection of prints.

The Editor,
APOLLO.

Yours sincerely,
P. H. LAWSON,
Mayor.
The Mayor's Parlour,
Chester.

SALE ROOM NOTES & PRICES

BY BRICOLEUR

THERE have been some notable prices to record during the past month, particularly in silver and porcelain sales. Oriental carpets have also shown a tendency to rise in price, although their value is, by and large, still below the extremely high prices of two years ago, when it was more difficult than it is now to purchase plain modern carpeting. We are well accustomed by now to the high prices paid for Regency furniture, but there was some surprise at a bid of £170 for a pair of small painted pine chiffoniers. It is true that these were very saleable, both in design and size, and had the original decoration, but there will be many who remember that fifteen or so years ago a country dealer would have considered that he had made an extremely good sale at a tenth of the price quoted. £70 were paid for three early Victorian papier-mâché chairs, one of unusually attractive decoration; probably a record auction price for furniture of this sort.

PICTURES. A good price was obtained at Christie's for a pair of mid-XIXth century Canadian pictures by C. Kriehoff, painted in 1861. These two, of Red Indians stalking and killing a deer, 13 in. by 18 in. and 14 in. by 20½ in., made 500 gns. In the same February sale another XIXth century picture by Margaret D. I. Dicksee of Angelica Kauffman visiting Reynolds' studio, exhibited at the Royal Academy of 1892, 40 gns. A set of four London coaching inn views by J. C. Maggs (1884) made 95 gns. A group of Dutch cavaliers smoking round a table, signed with the monogram of Jacob Duck and dated 1649, 20 in. by 28 in., 160 gns. A pair of small Venetian scenes by F. Guardi, 15 in. by 12 in., made no less than 560 gns., and another pair of small pictures by Chardin, "Picking Cherries" and "The Morning Ride," 17½ in. by 14½ in., 250 gns. A pair of landscapes by F. Zuccarelli, "A Woody River Scene" and "A Landscape," 21½ in. by 28 in., 125 gns.

In a later sale (16th February) a painting of a peacock, peahen and poultry in a garden, signed by P. Casteels and dated 1726, made 110 gns.; a G. Tilborch of peasants merrymaking, 32 in. by 46 in., 140 gns.; and a Dirk Hals of ladies and gentlemen on a terrace, on a panel (unframed) 17½ in. by 28 in., 150 gns. In another sale two "cardinal" pictures by Francois Brunery, one, "The Cardinal's Birthday," made 560 gns., and "The Cardinal of Rheims," 25 in. by 19 in., 240 gns. "Les Amateurs de Gravures," an interior of the artist's home by the same painter, made 660 gns. A Panini view of Roman ruins, with figures, 36 in. by 51 in., brought 190 gns.

Sotheby's sale of 28th February included a fragment of a Raphael cartoon, very close in style to the Royal cartoons for the Vatican tapestries in the Victoria and Albert Museum. This, in coloured wash and body-colour, was of a half-length figure of a child clinging to the skirt of a woman, 15½ in. by 16½ in., and made £980. A triptych, known as the Pérussis Altarpiece, by N. Froment, formerly in the Chartreuse de Bonpas, near Avignon, of the Empty Cross with St. John the Baptist and St. Francis presenting two members of the Pérussis family with views of Avignon and the Rhone, made £600. The Pérussis family, originally political refugees from Florence, were prominent in the public life of Avignon from the early XVIth century. A Tintoretto imaginary portrait of Ranieri Dandolo, 45 in. by 37 in., made £380. Ranieri Dandolo was Vice-Doge of Venice in 1202, son of the leader of the Venetians at the conquest of Constantinople and founder of the Venetian Levant Empire. This picture had been exhibited at the Exhibition of Italian Art, 1934 (No. 379).

A collection of paintings sent by the executors of the late Sir William Bird included a number by Dutch masters. A still life panel of pewter and silverware by P. Claesz, 22½ in. by 37½ in., made £260; a P. Casteels of summer flowers in a marble urn, 16½ in. by 14 in., £90; two by Jacob Cornelisz, "The Adoration of the Magi" and "The Young Christ being subject to His Parents," 13½ in. by 8½ in., £100. "Dutch Ships anchoring off the Coast," by H. J. Dubbels, on a panel 20½ in. by 24½ in., £130; a river scene with a windmill by Jan van Goyen, signed with initials and dated 1645, on a panel 14½ in. by 19½ in., £440; a pair of canal scenes in Dutch towns, 23½ in. by 33 in., signed by Jan Storck, £420; a still life of a porcelain dish with walnuts, 20½ in. by 16½ in., signed with initials by Hubert van Ravesteyn, £280. Another, of summer flowers in a metal urn, by J. B. Monnoyer, 38 in. by 32 in., £230. A pair of pictures by the same artist of spring flowers in glass vases, 20½ in. by 19½ in., £75. A Teniers interior of a barn with boors

merrymaking, signed, 20½ in. by 27½ in., £160; and a Simon Verelst, of peaches and grapes, signed and indistinctly dated, 25 in. by 20½ in., £110.

At Phillips, Son and Neale a pair of Panini views of landscapes with ruins made £42.

SILVER. A French silver-gilt toilet service, weighing 1,045 oz. (without bottles), made £580 at Christie's. This comprised some twenty-three pieces and was chased with festoons of flowers, scrolls and foliage on plain and matted grounds. A table service, 1799, 1815 and modern, weighing 333 oz. 15 dwt., brought £200. This included some eighty knives, some with mother-o'-pearl handles. A 12½ in. diam. salver with three shell feet and a later border of engraved flowers by Isaac Cookson, of Newcastle, 31 oz. 3 dwt., £30. A pair of plain two-handled sauce tureens by Robert Garrard, 1802, 43 oz. 5 dwt., made £44; a George II plain circular salver, 12½ in. diam., engraved with armorials, by George Hindmarsh, 1737, 29 oz. 18 dwt., £48; a George II salver, of similar type, 46 oz. 14 dwt., 1755, £50; and a smaller George II salver, 6 in. diam., with another small salver of 1786, 16 oz. 2 dwt. in all, £24; a plain mug of 1741, by Francis Spilsbury, 13 oz. 2 dwt., £28.

A silver-gilt dessert service of 1801 to 1823, weighing 44 oz. without the knives, £70. Three George I plain octagonal casters by Charles Adam, 1718, 21 oz. 9 dwt., £92; and an Elizabethan Apostle spoon, surmounted by a figure of St. Peter with pierced nimbus (broken), possibly 1601, £10. In another sale a Commonwealth circular dish, embossed with a formal floral pattern, 7½ in. diam., maker's mark I.H. in monogram, 1649, 6 oz. 17 dwt., £88; a George I plain cylindrical coffee pot, 8½ in. high, by Nathaniel Gulliver, 1725, gross weight 17 oz. 13 dwt., £56; a plain oblong tray with gadrooned rim, 19½ in. wide, by Edward Edwards, 1819, 94 oz., £150; and a Paul Storr silver-gilt two-handled vase-shaped cup and cover, engraved with a coat-of-arms, 1816, 120 oz. 3 dwt., £72.

At a March sale at Sotheby's a parcel-gilt caudle cup and cover, circa 1680, marked with R.C. in a dotted circle, having a removable "sleeve" to the body, *repoussé* and chased with an intricate foliate design, 34 oz. 4 dwt., made £110. A Georgian oval tea tray of 1822, engraved with armorials and chased with shells and foliage, 29 in. wide, 174 oz. 2 dwt., made £165. Another caudle cup and cover, of similar date and with the same mark, 22 oz. 5 dwt., made £90. This was engraved with chinoiserie and a coat-of-arms. A Paul Storr stand cup of 1817, a trophy from the Chester Races of 1818, 14½ in. high and weighing 96 oz., made £90; a pair of small George I Newcastle candlesticks, with baluster stems and engraved with armorials, 1742, 22 oz. 2 dwt., by William Partis, £50; a George III coffee-pot by Abraham Portal, 1764, with a vase-shaped *repoussé* body and chased swan-neck, 29 oz. 13 dwt., £32. A George III hot-water jug by Emes and Barnard, 1819, 23 oz., brought £40, with a stand by the same maker. An oval soup tureen with gadroon rim and armorial engraving by Joseph Craddock and William Reid, 1819, 130 oz. 8 dwt., made £95; six boat-shaped pedestal salt cellars by Robert Hennell, with dates between 1784 and 1786, 16 oz. 18 dwt., £36; an early Georgian octagonal caster, with a slide-on cover pierced with foliate sprays, by Ebenezer Roe, 1715, 7 oz. 14 dwt., £30; an attractive set of twelve silver-gilt ice or teaspoons by Paul Storr, 1819, cast with a design of grapes and vine leaves, 23 oz. 15 dwt., £55. An oval cake basket of 1757, weighing 57 oz. 19 dwt., had the inscription, "At the launching of His Majesty's Ship Pembroke a 4th rate of 60 guns 1260 tons and 420 men 2 June 1757." This made £95.

Table services included a Scottish one of eighty-nine pieces by D. C. Rait of Glasgow, 1829 in date, and weighing 147 oz. 15 dwt.; 105 gns. were paid for this set, and £52 for sixty-eight pieces, mostly 1800, weighing 116 oz. 10 dwt. Eighty-seven pieces of table silver, Georgian and later dates, 70 oz., made £36; and £135 for one hundred and forty-four pieces of Victorian fiddle-pattern silver, 341 oz. 10 dwt. A Georgian travelling set of 1814-15, comprising a beaker, two knives, fork and spoon, teaspoon and marrow scoop, corkscrew and three mounted bottles, inscribed with the monogram of Anne, Countess of Newburgh, made £26; a gentleman's rose-wood dressing case with silver fittings, including four razors, shaving pot, and a manicure set, 1820-1, £15.

Phillips, Son and Neale sold a George III oval tureen with scroll handles and lion and paw feet, 150 oz., for £110.

FURNITURE. At a March sale at Christie's a Chippendale mahogany tripod table, with a balustraded circular top, a fluted column stem, and legs finishing in claw-and-ball feet, 27½ in. diam., made 260 gns. A set of eight mahogany chairs, including two

armchairs, of Chippendale design with waved ladderbacks, made 270 gns.; and a set of ten mahogany chairs with a pair of armchairs of Adam style, 155 gns. A William and Mary knee-hole writing-table, inlaid with formal scrolling foliage, 37 in. wide, 52 gns.; a William and Mary marquetry cabinet, with an arrangement of small drawers and a stand with five spirally-turned legs, 43 in. wide, 40 gns.; and a William III walnut cabinet, of similar type, 42 gns. The less experienced seekers of late XVIIth and early XVIIIth century furniture may wonder why one piece should be described as "William and Mary" period whilst another is more tersely designated "William III." There is, of course, no difference in the period, but whereas the term "William and Mary" implies a piece of English origin, "William III" leaves open the question of whether the furniture is of English or Dutch provenance. It is not always simple, even for the expert, to determine at a short examination which country a late XVIIth century piece of furniture belongs to.

A set of ten Cromwellian oak chairs, properly covered in leather, and with baluster legs and rectangular backs, made 92 gns.; and a Georgian mahogany toilet or powder stand, fitted with a Chinese porcelain bowl, on cabriole legs, 140 gns. This was a remarkably high price for such a species of furniture which, although widely popular during Edwardian times, probably largely on account of its "quaintness," a feature much appreciated by early collectors who loved to explain its original use to the uninitiated who had learned to use a lavatory basin, has not been in great demand for a good many years.

Another item of furniture no longer in high demand was a Jacobean oak half-tester bedstead with panelled and inlaid decoration, sold with red damask hangings and box spring mattress. This had been in the well-known collection of William Randolph Hearst, and made 16 gns. in an earlier sale, in which a large Adam mahogany cabinet, 9 ft. 3 in. wide, with glazed doors in the upper part and drawers and a cupboard under, was sold for 560 gns.

At Robinson and Foster's rooms, a Queen Anne walnut knee-hole writing- or dressing-table, only 30 in. wide, made £89 5s.; and a set of eight Chippendale style mahogany chairs with interlaced splats, £63; a Georgian mahogany two-part dining-table on pillar and tripod supports, extending to 9 ft. 3 in., £39 18s.

Phillips, Son and Neale sold a Dutch marquetry china cabinet, with glazed and panelled doors, 4 ft. 9 in. wide, for £54; a Regency cross-banded sofa table, on end-supports joined by a turned rail, £68; and an extending mahogany dining-table on claw-and-ball legs for £150.

ENGLISH PORCELAIN. The increasing value of rare examples is shown by the recent sale at Sotheby's of the pair of Bow groups, "Price's Horsemanship." Price was a celebrated horsemaster who gave trick-riding displays in 1760 at Dobney's in Islington, and the groups were probably specially made to his order, and perhaps the only examples ever modelled. This pair, measuring 9½ in., made their appearance on the London market in May, 1947, coming from a house in Northumberland. They then brought £720, and at the recent sale the price increased by £130. These groups are illustrated by Mrs. E. J. Marshall in *APOLLO ANNUAL* for 1951 (p. 16, Fig. 8, described on p. 23).

The same sale included a pair of Bow figures of cooks of about 1757, the man modelled after Bouchardon's "Cris de Paris," and the woman carrying a leg of mutton on a dish. It is recorded that sixteen of these "cooks" were ordered by a dealer named Fogg in 1756, and the quality of the examples sold would denote Chelsea workmen who were at Bow in 1757. An early Bow figure of a Vendangeur, in puce tricorn hat, puce-lined blue coat and yellow breeches, without shoes, 6½ in., made £70; and another early Bow figure of a woman from a set of the senses or the seasons, with a basket of flowers, 5½ in., £30; a garniture of three Bow frill vases, two of beaker form and one of baluster shape, with applied female masks and painted with insects and butterflies, 8½ in. to 12 in., £100.

Pieces from the Chelsea factory included an attractively coloured figure of "La Nourrice," after the Bertélémy de Blénod model, with red anchor mark, 7½ in., £750; a rare Chelsea vase inspired by a Chinese original, with hexagonal body and relief decoration, painted with flowering prunus boughs, red anchor period, 9½ in., £150; a white Chelsea figure of a seated monk holding a book on his knees inscribed "Omnia Gloria," red anchor period, 5½ in., £140; a rare set of twenty-eight Worcester armorial knives and forks, with pistol-shaped handles, decorated with sprays of flowers, £600; an early Worcester, or soft-paste Bristol, vase finely enamelled in Chinese taste, circa 1750-52, similar to an example in the Fitzwilliam Museum, 10½ in. high, £180; a pair of early Derby oval

leaf dishes, modelled with green and yellow leaves and bunches of grapes, 8 in. wide, £80; and an early Derby cow milk jug, with movable lid and brown dappled markings, the scalloped base with turquoise edging and gilt splashing, 6 in., £34. Bloor Derby included a pair of blue urns with finely modelled bouquets of garden flowers, marks crown and D in red, 6½ in., £36; and a pair of bough pots encrusted with flowers on a pale blue ground, 7½ in., £38; three Bloor Derby figures, one of Paul Pry inscribed "Hope I dont intrude," one of Sam Weller and another of a milkmaid, 5½ in. to 7½ in. high, £20.

BISCUIT. A fine Sèvres group, dating from about 1752, called "La Mangeuse de Raisins," after Boucher, made £150. It was modelled with two figures, a boy and a girl, holding bunches of grapes. The catalogue drew attention to Mr. Wilfred Sainsbury's article in *APOLLO* (June, 1950) "Sèvres Soft Paste Biscuit Figures."

IVORIES. At a recent sale of Japanese carvings at Christie's, a pair of joss-stick holders modelled as standing figures of elephants, with trappings decorated in mother-of-pearl and hardstones, 10½ in. high, made the excellent price of 170 gns. A standing figure of a goddess, holding a basket of flowers, and enriched in similar style, 13½ in. high, 54 gns.; a large figure of a warrior, holding a sword and scroll, 18½ in. high, 75 gns.; and two groups of a man with two children, 14 in. and 14½ in. high, 56 gns. each. An exceptionally large figure of a winged girl, with one arm raised, 21 in. high, 82 gns.; and a group of a man with a boy, 11½ in. high, 40 gns. Two figures of performing elephants, enriched with coral and semiprecious stones, 10½ in. and 12 in. high, made 42 gns. and 38 gns. each. The more usual groups of fishermen, sages, women carrying babies, etc., made prices ranging from 11 gns. to 30 gns.

PEWTER. At a late February sale at Sotheby's a rare pair of English Communion flagons, 14½ in. high, made £260. These were dated 1634 and bore the touchmark "E.G.", a pre-touchplate pewterer (Cotterell No. 5614a); they were formerly the property of the ancient church of St. Mary, Northgate, Canterbury. A less rare pair of Communion flagons, from the same church, dated 1792 but with no maker's marks, made £26; these were 12 in. high. The former pair are illustrated by Cotterell in *Old Pewter*, plate XXXVI (a). A set of six mid-XVIIIth century five-lobed plates, London made, 11½ in. diam., made £15; and a set of six plates, 9½ in. diam., bearing the imitation silver marks and touch of John Holley, London, circa 1690, £14; a rare candlestick, 7 in. high, circa 1700, with a hollow circular foot rising to a slender column, £16; three circular chargers, of which one was by Lawrence Dyer, London, circa 1680, 23 in. to 16½ in. diam., £20. Five baluster measures, 3½ in. to 7½ in., made £11; these were circa 1740-80, but the rims would have been added in the early XIXth century, when the Imperial Standard became universally adopted. A Charles II cylindrical tankard with "ramshorn" thumbpiece, 4½ in. to lip, £24. A late XVIIIth century West Country wine measure, 8 in. high, with two others of similar type with bulbous bodies, £15.

BELL-METAL MORTARS. The late Moir Carnegie formed a collection of English mortars, of which some forty-five were sold at Sotheby's February sale. The most important was an Elizabethan two-handled bell mortar, dated 1570, by a bell-founder of Bury St. Edmunds. The decoration round the body, 5½ in. diam., was a crown pierced by arrows and fleur-de-lys; £82 were paid for it, and £26 for a small mortar, 4½ in. diam., probably by Stephan Tonni, also with the date 1570. The others, sold in twos and threes, made considerably less: a James I mortar with two double handles, roughly cast and ornamented within wreaths with an eagle's head, 5½ in. diam., and another dated 1701, £9; a massive bell mortar with the inscription "WB WB. Anno 1642 1641," 10½ in. diameter, with a flat-ended pestle, £5; and another dated 1657 and inscribed "Bristoll," 6½ in. diam., with two smaller mortars, £3 10s.

PAPERWEIGHTS. A St. Louis gentian weight, included in a sale of 23rd February, with a brilliant blue flower with bright green foliage and star-cut base, 2½ in., made £72; a St. Louis mushroom weight, with a bouquet of pastel coloured florettes and an unusual coral pink border, 2½ in., £72. A baccarat clematis paperweight, with shredded plum-red petals and white centre, on shaded bright green leaves, 2½ in., £52; a baccarat weight dated B.1848, with white laticinio ground set with florettes and silhouette canes of animals, 2½ in., £32; a pansy weight, of deep purple colour with emerald green leaves, on star-cut base, 2½ in., £14; a Clichy bouquet paperweight, with a spray of three white flowers, 2½ in., £42. Four Clichy weights of small size, one with the "Clichy" rose, made £34.